

Photoshop Tools

Selection tools

- Several tools to choose from – Marquee, Magic Wand, Lasso, Quick Selection, etc.
- Quick Selection tool – Great tool for quickly selecting areas of a photo. It tries to recognize objects and expands to select the entire object.
- Refine edge – No matter what selection tools you use, always refine the edge of selections for seamless transition of effects or changes
 - Can change how you see the selection with the View Mode selection box
 - The most useful adjustments are Smooth, Feather and Shift Edge
 - Adjust sliders until the edge of the selection is feathered and not sharp-edged
 - The amount of feathering, smoothing, etc. depends on the resolution of photo

Brush

- Commonly used tool for painting on layer masks, etc.
- There are many different brush shapes available from the Options bar (click on the icon that has a number under it)
- Changing brush size (any of the following will work)
 - Size option in Options bar
 - Right click and move Size slider
 - Hold Alt key then hold down the right mouse button and slide the mouse left and right
 - Right bracket increases diameter; Left bracket reduces diameter
- Changing Opacity (any of the following will work)
 - Slider in Options bar
 - Scrubby slider – Hold down the left mouse button on the word Opacity in the Options bar and slide mouse left or right.
 - If the Opacity number changes too quickly, hold the Alt key down while sliding the mouse. It will change in tiny increments. (The Shift key will increase the speed of change)
 - To change the edge of the brush and make it softer, right click and change the Hardness slider, OR
 - Hold Alt key then hold down the right mouse button and slide the mouse up and down

Rotate canvas

- This is useful when painting with a brush. It allows more comfortable brush strokes in your choice of direction. Press and hold the “R” key, then left click and drag your mouse left or right. Escape to restore to original position

Crop tool

- If a specific size is desired, enter the Width and Height in pixels in the Options bar

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- If you want to reduce the resolution at the same time, that can be entered in the Options bar
- To clear the settings used above, press the Clear button in the Options bar
- The Crop Guide Overlay can be changed in the Options bar to help align the crop with objects in the photo
- Perspective – Use the Perspective checkbox in the Options bar to change perspective of the crop at the same time. (Only available if Delete is selected)
- Cropped Area can be deleted or hidden by selecting the appropriate option in the Options bar after you've drawn the cropping box and before you have committed the crop.
 - Delete and Hide are not available if you are working on the Background layer. Either select another layer or convert the Background to a normal layer (double click on the Background and then press Enter when the New Layer dialogue comes up)
 - Delete will permanently remove the area outside the crop
 - Hide will hide the area outside the crop. If you decide the crop would have been better in a different position, you can still change it by using the Move tool and moving the layer around. This works even after saving and closing the file.

Clone Stamp

- Select the Stamp tool (S)
- While holding the Alt key, left click in the area you want to copy from. Then release the Alt key
- The mouse should display what the replacement will look like just by hovering over the area
- Left click in the area you want to replace
- For more accurate blending, sometimes you may want to change the Opacity in the Stamp tool in the Option Bar
- For mutli-layered files such as HDR files, you many need to change the Sample field in the Options bar by choosing "All Layers". (This selection will stay, even after closing and restarting Photoshop, until you change it back to "Current Layer") The icon to the right of the Sample field will cause the cloning to ignore adjustment layers.

Spot Healing Brush

- Replaces the area you paint with similar pixels from the surrounding area
- Easier than clone stamp but sometimes not as accurate
- Now Content-Aware by selection in the Option bar
- Also has a "Sample All Layers" checkbox in the Options bar

Levels Adjustment Layer

- Use a Levels adjustment layer to improve the contrast and impact of an image
- Select Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Levels or use the icon on the bottom of the Layers panel
- In the Levels adjustment dialogue, move the sliders under the graph

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- A good start is to move the left (black) and right (white) sliders directly under the graph inward toward the center until they are under the left and right end points of the graph
- Adjust further if necessary to improve image
- Adjust center (gray) slider to adjust contrast in the mid tones
- Can also select one of the presets by description in the Levels field at the top of the Adjustments panel

Content-Aware Fill

- Select the area you want to replace. Lasso tool is often the best for this. Include a small area around the object.
- Select Edit>Fill from the menu
- In the dialogue box that appears, select Content-Aware in the Use field at the top and press OK
- If it isn't exactly right, undo it and try it again. It may be different each time

Content-Aware Scale

- Won't work on Background layer
- Select Edit>Content Aware Scale from menu
- Drag the handles on one or more of the sides to rescale the image
- Can be used to remove space between major subjects in a photo, or expand the space between objects

Vanishing Point

- Provides cloning or pasting objects in perspective
- Select Filter>Vanishing Point from the menu
- Create a grid first using the Edit Plane tool (upper left)
- Add additional planes using the Create Plane tool
- Use the Marquee or Clone tool to copy one area within the grid to another
- You can also paste another object into the grid and it will take on the perspective of the grid